

Equitable job evaluation

Job evaluation is a systematic analytical process to work out the 'size' of a job relative to others.

Typical factors used in assessing job size include:

- skills and knowledge
- responsibility
- demands and effort
- working conditions.

In addition to establishing relativities among jobs within an organisation, job evaluation can also be used to consistently compare jobs across organisations. Job evaluation schemes provide a clear and fair measure of the relative value of jobs within and across organisations but do not directly determine rates of pay.

Job evaluation is recognised internationally as a useful tool to help achieve gender equity in pay and employment conditions, but it can be affected by unintentional gender bias at any stage of the process of describing, analysing and evaluating jobs. Putting in place an equitable job evaluation system can address aspects of job evaluation that have been found to tend towards gender bias.

Gender bias in job evaluation is less likely to occur when:

- evaluators are trained in job evaluation and how to recognise and avoid gender bias
- there is transparency when designing and planning job evaluation projects
- there is good communication throughout the project
- the job evaluation system measures all of the characteristics of all the jobs
- processes and results are carefully documented
- there is ongoing monitoring and evaluation of outcomes by gender.

Gender bias is often not intentional and can occur in any of the processes involved in describing, analysing and evaluating jobs. Most commonly, gender bias in job evaluation occurs when assumptions are made about the nature and value of work in jobs that are mainly done by women or mainly done by men.

This is often because some skills are difficult to observe, especially those used in services involving changing interactions with people over time; and some skills are overlooked or undervalued, for example, if they are similar to unpaid domestic work, such as looking after others, cleaning and cooking. A better understanding of the skills used in service work, which can be overlooked or taken for granted, and especially skills used in interacting and relating, coordinating and shaping awareness, can be gained from using tools designed for this purpose such as the [Spotlight Skills Identification Tool \[hours-and-wages/pay/pay-equity/spotlight-skills-recognition-tool/\]](#).

There is research and case law on gender bias in job evaluation. [Gender Bias in Job Evaluation: A Resource Collection \[PDF, 483 KB\] \[assets/Uploads/tools-and-resources/publications/gender-bias-in-job-evaluation.pdf\]](#) includes some key cases, guidelines and research. The April 2009 United Kingdom decision in *Hartley v Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust*, provides detailed reasoning and guidance on job evaluation and gender bias.

An equitable job evaluation system addresses aspects of job evaluation that have been found to give rise to gender bias. It is designed to capture all relevant information about jobs to minimise gender bias. This includes:

- identifying
- assessing and measuring (putting a value on) skills
- knowledge
- responsibility and working conditions that contribute but may have been overlooked.

Equitable Job Evaluation reduces reliance on assumptions and makes values transparent. The implementation of equitable job evaluation can:

- help with identification of appropriate training and career development
- improve performance
- improve service delivery
- help staff feel more valued and better supported
- help attract and retain competent staff
- help ensure staff are paid appropriately.

The Equitable Job Evaluation System (EJE)

The Equitable Job Evaluation System was developed to address some aspects of job evaluation that have been found to have gender bias. It helps job descriptions and analysis (and associated human resource processes) to be complete, accurate and free from gender bias. The system includes:

- a factor plan and weightings
- a user guide to assist in the implementation, application and administration of the system
- a questionnaire to collect the information needed
- an overview report, the Equitable Job Evaluation Project Overview Report is also available.

Equitable Job Evaluation System factor families

The Equitable Job Evaluation system has 12 factors organised into three factor families.

- Skill factors: knowledge, problem-solving, interpersonal physical skills.
- Responsibilities factors: responsibilities for leadership, resources, organisational outcomes, services to people.
- Demands factors: emotional, sensory and physical demands, working conditions.

Specific features of the Equitable Job Evaluation System

The system draws on relevant research and cases, some major schemes implemented in the United Kingdom such as for local government, the civil service, the National Health Service, and universities, and on schemes used in pay equity jurisdictions in Canada. The system was developed and tested on a range of public sector jobs in New Zealand in 2005-2006. Some features of the Equitable Job Evaluation system factors are that it:

- recognises knowledge can be acquired in a range of formal and informal ways and does not tie knowledge to specific qualifications levels, or years of experience
- scores interpersonal skills according to the nature and purpose of the interactions rather than the duration or use of the skill
- recognises physical skills like dexterity, hand/eye and limb coordination
- recognises that leadership can be provided through influencing relationships in addition to reporting relationships; and that leadership may be exercised outside the employing organisation
- recognises the direct performance of services to people including service delivery that requires ongoing assessment and adjustment of the services, in a changing relationship with the service user
- recognises that some jobs:
 - make emotional demands on job-holders
 - require focused sensory attention and concentration
 - require strength and stamina
 - involve unpleasant conditions. Working conditions is generally an optional factor in job evaluation schemes.

Implementation of the Equitable Job Evaluation System

Users should note that the Equitable Job Evaluation tool material was prepared for a beta release phase and was not further developed following the disestablishment of the Pay and Employment Equity Unit. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment is no longer providing support for, or monitoring of, the use of the tool.

[Tools and Resources](#)

[\[tools-and-resources/\]](#)

[Spotlight skills recognition tool: Background research report](#)

[\[assets/Uploads/tools-and-resources/publications/spotlight-research-report.pdf\]](#)

Research report that provides the background to the Spotlight skills recognition tool

[Gender bias in job evaluation: A resource collection](#)

[\[/assets/Uploads/tools-and-resources/publications/gender-bias-in-job-evaluation.pdf\]](#)

Collection of resources from New Zealand and international publications about how to eliminate gender bias in job evaluation.

Please note that this content will change over time and may be out of date.

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